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# FIVE PLAYLETS

by

HESTER DONALDON JENKINS, Ph. D.



*Written for the  
Department of  
Social Betterment*

*Brooklyn Bureau  
of Charities*



*Price 25 Cents*

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# FIVE PLAYLETS



Written for the  
*Department of Social Betterment*  
*of the Brooklyn Bureau of Charities*  
by  
*Hester Donaldson Jenkins, Ph. D.*  
*Educational Supervisor*



## *Table of Contents*

MOTHER GOOSE UP-TO-DATE—A *Health Playlet*  
JUDITH AND ARIEL—A *Fresh Air Playlet*  
OUR FRIENDS THE FOODS—A *Food Playlet*  
IN A TENEMENT—A *Tenement Playlet*  
KILLING GIANTS—A *Juvenile Court Playlet*

## THE PLAY'S THE THING

A NEW idea which is just coming into popularity in the anti-tuberculosis campaign is the use of the play, or better still, the playlet, as an educational medium, and if the experience of those who have already tried this method counts for anything, it bids fair to be a channel of education that should be adopted throughout the country.

The use of plays to educate the public on health and social matters was first tried out at Springfield, Ill., a year ago in connection with the Civic Exhibit. The immediate success of these plays depicting conditions which could be described in dramatic form has induced the Department of Social Betterment of the Brooklyn Bureau of Charities to try to extend this method.

The plays presented in this pamphlet have been written so that they can be presented by children or adults with very little scenery or costuming. They can be given by children in schools, churches and elsewhere and will prove both entertaining and instructive. It is a matter of common experience that where children are used to co-operate in dramatic performances, the parents and friends always become interested in the subject of the performance. This is in itself a valuable educational asset for the play.

PHILIP P. JACOBS,

*Assistant Secretary  
The National Association for  
the Study and Prevention  
of Tuberculosis.*

## MOTHER GOOSE UP-TO-DATE

### A Health Playlet in One Scene

SCENE: *Empty platform except for two stools in opposite corners of stage front.*

*Characters.*

OLD WOMAN WHO LIVES IN A SHOE.

HER TWO CHILDREN—A boy and a girl—pale and thin.

LITTLE BOY BLUE

LITTLE BO PEEP

LITTLE MISS MUFFIT

LITTLE TOMMY TUCKER

MISTRESS MARY

LITTLE JACK HORNER

PRETTY MAID

YOUTH

} All rosy or tanned and plump.

COSTUMES: *Conventional. Boy Blue with horn, Bo Peep with crook, Miss Muffit with bowl, Maid with basket on arm, Old Woman with peaked hat, Mother Goose with panniers and kerchief and peaked hat.*

*(Enter Old Woman Who Lives in a Shoe leading two pale thin children.)*

O. W.—

I am the Old Woman Who Lives in a Shoe.

I had so many children I didn't know what to do.

But now, alas, I'm losing them, Consumption takes them off,

And soon my shoe will empty be, a byword and a scoff.

*(Enter Mother Goose. Old Woman leaves children and takes Mother Goose's hands.)*

O. W.—Dear Mother Goose, tell me how I can save my children from this dread disease.

M. G.—Dear Old Woman Who Lives in a Shoe, I've often thought of your case. I am sorry, for your children do look very delicate. *(Draws them to her and caresses them.)* My children live very long. Perhaps if I called them in they could tell you how they keep so well.

O. W.—Many thanks, Mother Goose. Let us ask them by all means.

1st Child—We'd like to grow strong!

2nd Child—We don't wish to be sick.

*(O. W. goes to stool farthest from entrance, seats herself with children at her feet. Mother Goose in centre calls, clapping her hands.)*

M. G.—Oho! Little Boy Blue!

L. B. B.—Who calls me? Oh, it is you, dear Mother Goose.

M. G.—Here is the Old Woman Who Lives in a Shoe; she wants you to tell her how you keep so well.

*(L. B. B. blows horn. M. G. seats herself on other stool.)*

L. B. B.—

I'm Little Boy Blue, I blow my horn  
In the country sweet 'mid the growing corn.  
I'm all day long in the sweet fresh air,  
With the sheep and the cows the country I share.

O. W.—

O bouncing boy with cheeks so red,  
With beaming smiles and curly head,  
Would that my boys were strong like you!  
Can the country air such health bestow?

M. G.—Indeed it can, as Little Bo Peep shows too. Oho! Little Bo Peep.

*(Enter L. B. P.; L. B. B. moves towards O. W.)*

L. B. P.—

I'm Little Bo Peep,  
I've left my sheep  
Tho' I know well where to find them.  
For they'll come home  
When I leave them alone,  
Hanging their tails behind them.

M. G.—Here is a country girl as gay as Little Boy Blue. See how the country keeps them fresh.

O. W.—Oh! tell me, my child, how you get your sweet looks.

L. B. P.—

Sing a song o' six pence  
The barley and the rye,  
I live among the blackbirds  
And look upon the sky.  
When the day is dawning  
I get up with the lark,  
And don't I work and play all day  
From sunrise until dark?

O. W.—Alas, my little girls must stay in the city; can they not grow strong there?



M. G.—Come, Mistress Mary. Show us how a city girl can keep well.

1ST CHILD (*Steps forward to meet Mistress Mary when she enters*)—

Mistress Mary, quite contrary,  
How does your garden grow?  
Have you cockle shells and silver bells  
And little maids all in a row?

M. M.—

No, Little Boy, my garden is small  
And I have no maids all in a row.  
But I've planted good seeds,  
And I pull up the weeds,  
And bright flowers are beginning to grow.

2ND CHILD—

Ho, Mistress Mary, quite contrary,  
Is your garden good for your health?

M. M.—

Oh yes, when I dig  
With my tools small and big,  
My muscles grow strong and steady  
And my skin gets all brown  
Like a real country clown.  
For all sorts of work now I'm ready.

(*Children go back to O. W.*)

O. W.—Oh, I see, my children might have little gardens in their backyards or in school yards and so grow strong like Mistress Mary. How do your other children keep well?

M. G.—Jack Horner says its through Fresh Air. Oho, Jack.

(*Enter Jack Horner.*)

J. H.—

There is a boy in our town,  
And he is wondrous wise.  
He never has his window shut  
But in the good air lies.  
He always goes to bed at eight  
And sleeps well thro' the night.  
And in the morning he feels fine  
For good air makes him bright.

O. W.—What is your name, my fine fellow?

J. H.—

Little Jacky Horner  
But I've given up my corner  
For a well aired room is better far for me.  
And better still I find  
For my body and my mind  
Is a big play ground, with grass and sand and tree.

M. G.—Here come two jolly friends. They'll show you another way to keep well. Come in children—don't be shy.

*(Enter Little Miss Muffit and Tommy Tucker hand in hand.)*

L. M. M. *(Drops a courtesy)*—  
I'm Little Miss Muffit,  
I sit on a tuffet  
And eat my good curds and whey.  
I have plenty of bread  
And meat that is red  
And eggs and hot soup thro' the day.

L. T. T.—  
I'm Little Tommy Tucker  
Who sings for my supper  
And puts in for breakfast a bid.  
Oh, I just love my dinner  
And if I'm a sinner  
I'm surely a healthy young kid.

*Together:*  
Good-morning, Mother Goose.  
Good-morning, Old Woman Who Lives in a Shoe.  
What a jolly world it is!

*(Enter Maid and Youth from opposite sides.)*

YOUTH—Where are you going my pretty Maid?

P. MAID—  
Going a walking, Sir, she said.  
Sir, she said, Sir, she said.  
Going a walking, Sir, she said.

YOUTH—May I go with you my pretty Maid?

MAID—  
Yes, if you wish, kind sir, she said.  
Sir, she said, sir, she said.  
Yes, if you wish, kind sir, she said.

YOUTH—What is your fortune, my pretty Maid?

MAID—  
My health is my fortune, sir, she said.  
Sir, she said, sir, she said.  
My health is my fortune, sir, she said.

YOUTH—Then let me share it, my pretty Maid.

MAID—Surely, come walking then sir, she said.

*Refrain.*

M. G.—They are always taking walks when they can't get tennis or ball.

*(Maid comes to O. W. and kneels by the children.)*

MAID—Oh, what dear little children, but they are not brown and stout like us.

B. P.—Perhaps if they'd come and play with us they'd grow bigger.

B. B.—Let's form a circle?

*(Form a circle with the two children in the centre and O. W. and M. G. smiling in opposite corners. Dance around.)*

ALL—

Ring around a rosy,

Pocket full of posy,

Who can give these children something good?

*(Separate in two lines with children hand in hand in centre.)*

M. MUFFITT *(Stepping forward and touching the children)*—I'll give you some curds and whey.

T. T.—And I'll give you eggs and meat and oatmeal.

*(Both step back into line.)*

B. B.—I'll take you to the country.

B. P.—And I'll play with you there.

M. MARY—I'll let you work in my garden.

J. HORNER—And I'll let you rest in our house with all the windows open.

MAID—I'll take you walking.

YOUTH—And show you how to play games.

CHILDREN—Oh, thank you, thank you.

*(Run one to O. W. and one to M. G., who sit on stools again.)*

O. W.—So do I thank you.

*End with folk dance of the eight well children.*

—

# JUDITH AND ARIEL

*A Playlet in One Scene*

---

## *Characters.*

JUDITH—Tall, slight girl, wears shirt waist and skirt with hair in braids.

NURSE—Conventional costume.

HEADACHE—RED IMP.

COLD—BLACK IMP.

WEARINESS—GRAY IMP.

} Either boys or girls or both.

FIRST GERM OF TUBERCULOSIS.

SECOND GERM OF TUBERCULOSIS

THIRD GERM OF TUBERCULOSIS.

{ Boys in dark clothes looking crawly. Perhaps made of paper, cambric or sack-  
ing and with pointed  
hoods coming over heads;  
tails permissible.

ARIEL—White robe and scarf. The dress to be of cheese cloth, two straight pieces fastened over shoulders, arms bare, girded high under arms, has ragged edge, loose hair. A thin, long scarf of white or rainbow gauze.

FAIRIES (Girls)—

LIGHT—In yellow, with flowers in hand and wreath on head.

LIFE—In pink, with flowers in hand and wreath on head.

BROWNIES (Either boys or girls)—

VIGOR—In green with leaves on head and branches in hands.

VIM—In green with leaves on head and branches in hands.

BOY SCOUT—Conventional costume.

CAMP FIRE GIRL—Conventional costume.

SCENE: *Room with window at back right, the window shut and shaded, a bed or couch at left. Room disorderly, a pile of debris in right corner front, consisting of a broken box, some crumpled paper, a few rags, a medicine bottle, etc.*

(Enter Germs.) ALL—

We—are—Germs—One—two—three!  
Sickness-bringers, that are we;  
We live best in dark and dirt,  
You look out or else we'll hurt.

(*Germs run around the room.*)

1ST GERM—Ho, what a nice room! How glad I am Judith's sick mother brought us in. (*Pokes the bed, kicks the pile of debris.*)

2ND GERM—Yes, and so dirty, too. (*Shuffles feet on the floor.*)

3RD GERM—Just where we like best to be when we can't be in some one's lungs. (*All run to the debris and snuggle in it.*)

1ST GERM—How lucky the window is shut. (*Gets up and tries it.*)

2ND GERM—Yes, not a ray of sunshine to scorch us. (*Jumps up and down.*)

3RD GERM—Say, you two, can't we have some fun here? (*All put heads together.*)

1ST GERM—Whom can we attack?

2ND GERM—Why, Judith lives here in all this dust and dark. We can easily get at her.

ALL (*Dance together and chant. Joins hands and dance in a circle*)—

1. Ho ho! ha ha!  
Let's get her quick.  
He he! hei hei!  
Let's make her sick.
2. We are Germs—one, two, three!  
Sickness-bringers, that are we.  
We live best in dark and dirt,  
Judith surely will get hurt.

(*Enter Judith.*) (*The Germs scamper to the corner and hide in the debris. Judith drags herself slowly to the couch and falls on it. Following her are Weariness pulling her back by the skirt, Cold slapping her on the shoulders and Headache pulling her hair.*)

JUDITH: Oh dear, how sick I feel.

HEADACHE: Yes, for I, Headache, am beating your head and burning your nerves, and giving you pain. Unhappy girl, to have Headache for a companion.

JUDITH: Oh my head! And I'm so tired.

WEARINESS (*In ghostly tone—pommeling at her*)— Yes, for I, Weariness, dog your footsteps. I weigh on your limbs like a ball of stone. I stop every eager movement. I make your days heavy and sad. Alas, for her who has Weariness ever with her!

JUDITH—It is so cold and yet the window is tight shut. I wonder where the cold comes from. (*Judith sneezes.*)

COLD (*Blowing at her shrilly*)—Here! For I, Cold, am in your room and in your bed, in your very bones, and I will not leave you. Unfortunate girl! whom Cold never leaves!

JUDITH—Oh dear, how sick I feel. (*Headache pulls her hair. Judith puts her hand to her head and cries.*) And I've such a headache! (*Cold gives her a poke and she shivers.*) It's so cold, and yet the window is tight shut, where does the cold come from?

COLD—Here (*pointing at her, Judith sneezes, Cold rocks with silent laughter*).

CHOR. OF GERMS (*Very low, sitting together, heads together. Ho ho! apart on Ha Ha! and so moving with the rhythm, jerking on each beat of the measure*)—

Ho ho! ha ha!

Let's get her quick.

He he! Hei hei!

Let's make her sick.

1ST GERM (*shaking his finger*)—It's pretty easy to attack her when Cold has already got her.

2ND GERM (*nods*)—And with Headache and Weariness to help. (*Hug themselves and chuckle.*)

3RD GERM—Here come the Boy Scout and the Campfire Girl—I don't like them.

(*Enter Boy Scout and Camp Fire Girl.*)

BOY—Hello, Judith, come out and play with us.

GIRL—Yes, we are going to have such fun. (*Dances about the room, then goes to Judith and pulls her.*)

JUDITH (*Half rises but Weariness pulls her down*)—Oh, I can't; I am so tired. (*Headache pulls her hair.*) Oh, my head!

BOY—I should think you would be sick in this stuffy old room. (*Hits the window frame with his fist.*)

GIRL—Do come out, you'll feel much better in the fresh air. (*Takes hold of Judith's hand.*)

JUDITH (*Pulls hand away and turns over in bed*)—I wish I could, but I am too cold and tired. (*Headache gives Judith's hair another pull and she groans.*)

GIRL (*to Boy, speaking to him, facing him and taking lapel of his coat*)—I wish we could help her.

BOY—Let's get someone who can. (*Girl claps hands and they rush out.*)

GERMS (*Germs have been watching them eagerly; one is on his hands and knees, jumps up in corner as Boy and Girl go out and clap hands.*)

1ST GERM—Ha ha!

2ND GERM—Ho ho!

3RD GERM—He he!

ALL—We will soon have her in our grip. \*

JUDITH (*lies back with closed eyes. Headache pulls her hair steadily. Weariness presses her feet and limbs down and Cold puts a hand on her throat.*)

HEADACHE—Lie still, and think of Headache; I give you pain.

COLD—Lie still, and think of Cold; I numb your heart.

WEARINESS—Lie still, and think of Weariness; I weigh you down.

HEADACHE—Oh, the nurse, alas!

(*Enter Nurse.*)

NURSE—Good morning, Judith, how are you this beautiful day?

JUDITH—Very weak, thank you; I can't think what is the matter; I am tormented by headache and cold.

NURSE (*takes her pulse*)—Dear me, if this goes on you will have tuberculosis.

GERMS (*Chuckle*)—

He he!

It's *we*;

We're making her sick.

NURSE—Why isn't your window open?

JUDITH (*Cold squeezes her*)—Oh, it is too cold now; I couldn't stand any more.

NURSE—Why, my dear child, the air outside is much better and warmer than in this room.

GERMS (*Huddle together*)—Rrrrrrrrrrr!

NURSE (*Goes to window and opens the shade, groups of fairies seen outside. Headache twitches Judith.*)

JUDITH—Oh, it makes my headache so bad.

NURSE—No, it will drive Headache away. (*Opens window.*)  
Come Ariel, we want fresh air.

(*In jumps Ariel, standing an instant on the window ledge. Judith sits up and stares at her, Headache and Cold and Weariness shrink into opposite corner from Germs.*)

ARIEL—

Here I come! after me, my good Fairies.

Come Life, come Light,

Each fairy sprite;

Come Vigor, come Vim,

My Brownies trim.

Come in.



*(Leaps down, the four follow her, waving branches and flowers.)*

LIGHT *(runs forward)*—I am Light, to Judith health I'll bring  
*(steps behind Ariel).*

LIFE—I am Life, my praises soon she'll sing.

VIGOR—I am Vigor, I come with Fresh Air.

VIM—I am Vim, a spirit brisk and fair.

NURSE—There now, doesn't that seem better? The good air will  
drive away your headache.

HEADACHE—Oh, I am getting so faint; I hate Light.

LIGHT—And I hate you *(runs after her)*.

WEARINESS—Vigor is chasing me away *(Vigor runs after her  
and chases her out of the window.)*

COLD—I can't stand it *(Life chases her out of the window)*.

VIM *(Goes to Judith and raises her from the couch)*—There, get  
up Judith; we will help you.

*(Germs get up and scamper into the opposite back corner. Stand  
with hands outstretched, palms against the fairies. One puts his hands  
over his eyes.)*

1ST GERM—Oh, what shall we do!

2ND GERM—They will drive us away.

3RD GERM—And we nearly had her in our clutches.

1ST GERM—Oh! *(Claps his hands.)*

2ND GERM—Oh oh! *(Throws back head and clenches fists.)*

3RD GERM—Oh oh oh! *(Puts fists in eyes as though crying.)*

*(Nurse straightens the bed.)*

ARIEL *(Stands in center, waves her long veils from right to left  
and then left to right in time with her words. Half chants)*—

Away all dirt and dark,

When I come in.

Away all dull fatigue

When I come in.

Away Headache and Cold

When I come in.

Away sickness and Germs

When I come in.

*(Waves toward the Germs. Vigor and Vim run toward them and  
chase them around the room and pummel them while they squeal.)*

GERMS—We're going; yes, we're going. We don't like Light  
and Air. Ah! *(Run off the stage.)*

JUDITH (*Has been stretching herself and looking out of window and then stands, looking at Ariel with her eyes wide open. Nurse straightens room*)—Why, how much better I feel! I didn't know Ariel could make so much difference. (*Embraces Ariel.*) I shall always love you because you drove away Headache and Cold and Weariness.

ARIEL—That is what I will always do if you will only open the windows and let me in.

(*Enter Boy Scout and Camp Fire Girl.*)

GIRL—Hurrah, Judith, you look lots better; come out and play now. (*Takes her hand.*)

BOY—And how nice your house feels, and it looks so bright. (*Looks about and peeps from the window.*)

JUDITH—Yes, for Ariel has come in. (*Points to her.*)

#### TABLEAU

*Ariel stands in the center, Judith kneels before her. Light and Life, Vigor and Vim are grouped to the right of Ariel, Boy Scout and Camp Fire Girl and Nurse stand smiling at the left. Into the window look the Germs and sickness shaking fists and frowning at Ariel.*

# OUR FRIENDS THE FOODS

## A Playlet in One Scene

SCENE: *Anywhere.*

*Characters.*

(In order of their appearance.)

MOTHER—Dress of a lady.

GIRL—Nicely dressed girl of about 12 years of age.

BOY—Nicely dressed boy of about 14 years of age.

MAID—In black with cap and apron.

SOUP—Thin boy in yellow.

MEAT—Boy in fur cap and fur mittens.

PICKLES—Boy in olive green tights.

CANDY—A girl in striped red and white. (Maybe a roll of white cardboard, encircling her with red cords, holding it over the shoulders and red paper put on in spiral.)

CHEWING GUM—Green, and peaked cap like Wrigley's.

MILK—Girl in plain cream white—flowers in hair.

EGG—Boy in white paper balloon blouse with yellow cap and sleeves.

TEA—Girl in dark brown with black leaves in black hair.

COFFEE—Brown boy in light brown with berries or brown buttons.

FRUIT—Girl in red dress, with apple in hand, cherries in hair.

VEGETABLE—Boy in green with wreath of leaves.

BEER—Boy in golden brown with fluffy white collar and white cap.

WHISKEY—Boy in flame-colored tights.

BREAD—Boy in white baker's suit.

CEREAL—Girl in pink or blue with strings of popcorn.

N. B.—If costumes are not possible, the foods could be labelled with names on band across the breast.

(Enter Mother with an arm over shoulder of Boy and Girl, one on each side.)

MOTHER—Children, I have invited a party for you, and wish you to choose your friends among them.

GIRL—Oh, what fun!

BOY—When are they coming?

MOTHER—There's the first guest. Let him in (to maid who enters door).

MAID (*Ushers Soup*)—Here is Mr. Soup. (*Bows to Mother, then faces audience on left while group half face him at right.*)

SOUP—

I'm the all popular Soup,  
After me all people troop;  
I nourish and warm  
And never do harm,  
I'll be a friend to each one in this group.

*(Shakes hands with each.)*

GIRL—Oh, I like you.

BOY—Pshaw! there isn't enough to you.

SOUP—

There is all to me that you put in,  
At your wish I can be thick or thin;  
I eat pepper and meat,  
Cheese, milk, carrot and beet;  
To turn me away'd be a sin.

*(to the Boy)*

Don't you want me for a friend, a daily or at least a weekly friend?

BOY—I'll see. Here comes another.

MAID—Mr. Meat. *(Enter Meat—Soup steps behind Mother to right.)*

MOTHER—Oh, here is someone you like.

MEAT—

I am Meat, I make people strong,  
With my friendship they grow broad and long;  
If they take me each day  
They will soon come to say  
Meat's the best friend to have come along.  
Ding dong,  
Ding dong!

For 'tis meat that makes children strong.

*(To Boy)* Do you want to play baseball, or football, or run or row or swim? Then embrace me; I'm your man.

BOY—You bet! *(Embraces Meat.)*

GIRL *(Runs up to Meat)*—I want to swim, too, and run and dance and play tennis. So you must be my friend, too.

SOUP *(Comes forward)*—Hello, old fellow. I am always glad of your companionship. *(Shakes hands.)*

MOTHER—Here comes three chums. *(Meat and Soup go to right front.)*

MAID—Pickles, Candy and Chewing Gum.

GIRL *(Rushes up to Candy and embraces her; Boy shakes Pickles by the hand).*

ALL THREE—

We come for fun, for fun, for fun,  
We have no use under the sun;  
We keep you busy, we please your taste;  
We're just amusing, but waste, but waste.

*(Wave their heads as they speak and bow on the last line.)*

GIRL—Oh, I like you all so much.

MOTHER—But let us see. *(Comes forward—children pass to rear.)* Candy, are you a good friend to a girl?

CANDY—If you invite me once in a while, I'm a jolly visitor, but lots of people tire of me when I come often. I even make them sick.

GIRL—Then I'll only invite you when I have a party.

BOY—Chewing gum would never make you sick.

MOTHER—No, but he is no good. Chewing Gum, can you make a boy a good athlete, or make him grow, or swell his muscles?

CHEWING GUM—

Oh, no; I'm no good,  
I'm really no food.  
I'm just a good chance to spend money,  
Some boys find me fun,  
But a biscuit or bun  
Would give you more value for money.

*(Has a lively manner; dances and turns somersault.)*

BOY—Oh, dear!

MOTHER—How about you, Pickles?

PICKLES—

I bite and sting those who eat me,  
And often their stomachs I hurt;  
I never make fat, flesh or muscle;  
I'm not a good friend, but a flirt.

*(Bends forward, points and waves his hands.)*

GIRL—I suppose we'd better tell you, too, to come only to parties. *(Three dance in circle.)*

Ha ha, ha ha!

Foolish Foods are we;  
Ask us not too often,  
Or else sick you'll be. *(Dance off to right back.)*

MOTHER—Here's a very old friend.

MAID—Mistress Milk. *(Comes to center and bows to Mother and audience.)*

MILK—

Mid Sweetmeats and luxuries,  
Jellies like silk;  
Be't never so simple,  
There's no food like Milk.  
Milk, pure rich Milk,  
Be it never so simple,  
There's no food like Milk.  
I'm the first friend of babies,  
I'm good for the child;  
I'm fattening and nourishing,  
I'm smooth, sweet and mild.  
Milk, pure rich Milk,  
Be it never so simple,  
There's no food like Milk.  
You may turn me to butter,  
Or good curds and whey,  
Or make of me cheeses,  
Or let the cream stay,  
Milk, pure rich Milk,  
Be it never so simple,  
There's no food like Milk.

GIRL (*runs up to her*)—I'll make you my friend.

BOY—I prefer a strong man like Meat.

MILK—Here comes my comrade Egg, with whom I visit my sick boys and girls. (*Steps to left back.*)

MAID—Master Egg.

EGG (*Runs in*)—  
Hello!

I'm Egg—I'm good and yet you beat me, Ha ha!

I'm like a colt, I have to be broken to be any use, Ha ha!

BOY—And you're always getting into hot water, ha ha!

GIRL—And then you boil as if you were mad, ha ha!

MILK—If you marry me we'll be Egg Nog.

SOUP—Come and be my comrade, I need you.

MEAT—Well, I don't; I can get along without you.

MOTHER—Children, will you have Egg for a friend? He's one of the best friends a child can have with him every day in the week.

CHILDREN—Yes, we'll have him for a friend. (*Each take his hand and the three skip and sing.*)

Come, come, come with me,

We will live together, we;

Ho ho ho! he he he!

Without Egg we ne'er shall be.

GIRL—Who is that coming?

MOTHER—Oh, I didn't invite them; they are enemies.

MAID—Tea and Coffee.

TEA & COFFEE—

Tea and Coffee, we are so benighted

We do not know when we are slighted;

So we came to your party, as jolly and hearty

As though we'd been really invited.

TEA—But people are always begging us to come.

MOTHER—Yes, they invite you; but what do you do to them?

TEA (*mysteriously*)—Make 'em nervous!

COFFEE (*explosively*)—Keep them from sleeping!

TEA—Make 'em think they have been nourished when they haven't.

COFFEE—Turn them yellow!

MOTHER—Do you want such guests at your party?

GIRL—No, no.

BOY—Not for a strong boy. (*Exit Tea and Coffee hanging their heads.*)

MOTHER—Here come two that I *did* invite.

MAID—Fruit and Vegetable.

MEAT (*Goes to meet them*)—Hello, old friends; always glad to see you.

FRUIT—I'm good for breakfast (*puts hand on breast and bows*).

VEGETABLE—And I'm good for lunch (*puts hand on breast and bows*).

BOTH—We're both meant for dinner

Or for a picnic munch.

FRUIT—I furnish acid (*puts hand on breast and bows*).

VEGETABLE—And I furnish ash (*puts hand on breast and bows*).

BOTH—We're tasty in salads.

VEGETABLE—And I improve hash.

GIRL—Fruit, you shall be my friend.

BOY—Come, Vegetable; let us be chums.

MOTHER—Oh, who are these strange creatures? I don't know them. (*Steps back.*)

GIRL—I'm afraid. (*Shrinks behind Mother.*)

BOY—I think they look interesting.

MAID—Whiskey and Beer.

BEER—I'll booze you; I'll dull you; I'll soften your brain.

WHISKEY—I'll madden you, burn you, inflame you again.

MOTHER (*Steps forward, waves them away*)—You are worse than Tea and Coffee—leave us quickly.

BOY (*Steps toward them*)—I'd like to play with you a little and see if you are really so bad as Mother says.

MILK—Oh, yes, they are; if you wish my friendship you'll leave them alone (*pulls his arm*).

MEAT—If you wish any appetite for me— (*seizes the other arm*).

EGG—Or for me— (*puts hand on shoulder*).

MEAT—You'll leave them alone.

MOTHER—Go away, my children will not receive you.

GIRL—Yes, go away.

BOY—Yes, go now— (*reluctantly turns his back. Exeunt Whiskey and Beer arm in arm*).

MOTHER—Here come my last guests.

MAID—Master Bread and Mistress Cereal. (*Enter Bread and Cereal hand in hand; bow to all, face audience.*)

CEREAL—We are brother and sister.

BREAD—The best friends to man in this world.

CEREAL—You can't get along without us.

BREAD—We'll support you when all other friends fail.

CEREAL—Oatmeal, Cornflakes, Grapenuts, Force, Rice; I have many names, but am always your friend.

BREAD—Black or brown or white, leavened or unleavened—you need me always, the staff of life.

BOY—Oh, yes; we know you and like you. Good old Bread.

GIRL—And sweet Cereal! (*Steps back so that foods form a semi-circle around Mother and Children.*)

MOTHER—These are your friends. Some for every day and some only for occasions. Now you can play together.

GIRL—Let's have a dance.

BOY—Candy, will you dance with me?



GIRL—I'll take Meat. Bread and Milk, you go together, and Vegetable and Fruit, Egg and Cereal, Soup and Pickles. (*Pair off.*)

MOTHER—Here, Chewing Gum, you're harmless, so you may look on, but you are not good enough to dance at the party. (*Chewing Gum stands in the corner. Others arrange for a Sir Roger de Coverly.*)

*Tea and Coffee come in at one side and Whiskey and Beer at the other, and either make the music or clap their hands and whistle for the dance. Mother stands at back. Maid to opposite corner from Chewing Gum. Dance.*

*Finis.*



# IN A TENEMENT

## A Playlet in One Scene

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### Characters.

MRS. DAY.

KATIE DAY.

TIM DAY.

MRS. THOMPSON.

JENNIE THOMPSON.

MR. JONES, Janitor.

MR. BARBER, Landlord.

SCENE: *Kitchen with basin and towel on stand—two straight chairs, table with dishes, etc., kettle somewhere on stove if possible, broom in corner. One window.*

COSTUMES: *Present day—poor, except landlord's, which is a prosperous business suit. Katie's arm to be blackened as tho' bruised.*

*(Mrs. Day working at the table—enter Tim. Hits his mother on cheek with a pea-shooter.)*

TIM—Ha! ha! good shot.

MRS. DAY—Oh, Tim!

TIM—Say, Ma, I want to go and play with the fella's.

MRS. DAY—Oh, I wish you wouldn't; those boys teach you such bad tricks. They shoot craps and are regular hoodlums. Why can't you stay home?

TIM—Shucks! what could I do in this little hole? And we ain't got no backyard. Some boys live in places where they've got fine yards to play in. Wish't *we* had one. Mighty bum joint this.

MRS. DAY *(Sighs)*—Yes, if we could only afford a better home! This is dark and damp. I'm always afraid you children'll get consumption like Mamie Biggs. But what can we do? There wasn't an apartment in this neighborhood for what your father can pay that has enough windows in it. I do the best I can. I keep all I have open day and night. But still you grow pale. *(Takes Tim's face in her hands and looks at it anxiously.)*

TIM—Aw—cut it out. *(Sends another pea at the window.)* Then you see I must play in the street—how else can I get exercise and air? *(Starts to the door.)* So long!

*(Enter Katie crying and nursing her arm.)*

KATIE—Oh oooooooooo!

MRS. DAY—Whatever is the matter, Katie?

KATIE—I fell down in the hall. Oh, it was so dark; it always is, and I caught my foot in that torn oilcloth near the door, and fell flat on my face. I put out my hand and I guess I've sprained it. Oh, how it hurts!

MRS. DAY (*Takes hand, then pours water from kettle into the basin and bathes it*)—Poor child! It's a shame about that oil cloth. I nearly fell on it myself yesterday.

TIM (*Shoots a pea at Katie*)—Biff!

KATIE—You horrid boy!

TIM—Say, why don't you ask the janitor to change it? I s'pose he can't help the dark hall, but he could get a new oilcloth. Let's ask the old guy anyway and see what he says.

MRS. DAY—Do go and get him. We'll show him Katie's arm. (*Exit Tim.*) That'll keep Tim busy a minute anyway, he's like a kettle with the lid off.

KATIE—Oh, dear, oh—————!

MRS. DAY—There, don't cry. I'll fix it up.

(*Enter Mrs. Thompson and Jennie. Jennie with the newspaper folded like a swatter in her hand.*)

MRS. T.—We heard Katie crying and want to know what is the matter.

KATIE—I've h-hurt my arm.

MRS. DAY (*Places a chair for Mrs. Thompson, who sits*)—It's that loose oil cloth in the hall, and it's so dark there too. We've sent for the janitor to complain.

MRS. T.—I guess I'll stay and complain of our neighbors. They keep their garbage uncovered and our rooms are just full of flies.

JENNIE—Yes, we try to swat them—this is what I do it with—but my, ain't they thick! We have to keep every bit of food covered or they'd crawl all over it, nasty little things! There's one now. (*Hits Mrs. Day's shoulder.*)

MRS. DAY (*Wincing*)—What harm do they do?

JENNIE—Oh mercy, didn't you know how they carry disease and infection on their sticky legs and feet and spread them all over the food, and then we eat it and get sick? Augh! (*Slaps the table.*) We learned all about it in a lecture at school.

MRS. T.—Yes, my baby was sick, and I sent for the district nurse, and she said it was probably the flies that settled on its bottle. But I just can't keep them away.

(Enter Tim and Mr. Jones.)

JONES—Well, Ma'am, what's the matter now?

MRS. DAY—Oh, Mr. Jones, can't you get that oilcloth in the hall patched? Here's my Katie, just look at her arm (*pushes Katie forward, Jones looks at the arm*) from catching her foot in the oilcloth.

JONES (*Shrugs*)—I'm sure it ain't my fault, Ma'am. I can't do nothing. I've asked and asked to have that mended. I nearly fell in it myself. (*Jennie suddenly darts across the room and slaps his head.*) Here! what are you at?

JENNIE—Flies, I'm swatting 'em.

JONES—Well, you needn't swat me. I ain't no fly—see!

MRS. DAY—Won't the landlord do anything?

JONES—I can't get him to. He just swears at me.

JENNIE—I tell you what we must do. Lets send for the Tenement Inspector. We've got a book all about it. (*Waves her paper and runs out.*)

JONES—We don't want *him*.

MRS. T.—Yes, we do. (*To Mrs. Day*) Jennie'll show you. (*Re-enter Jennie with book "For You."*)

JENNIE—See this book—it's called "For You." It tells us just what to do. "If Things Are Wrong."

If anything is wrong, tell the janitor.

If it is not attended to promptly, write the landlord.

If he doesn't do what is right, report it to the Tenement House Department. You do not have to sign your name, they will pay attention to your complaint just the same. Be sure to give the address of the house by street and number or the Department cannot help you. State clearly what is the matter. If nothing is done at once, don't think they are paying no attention to it.

Don't make spite complaints because you are angry at the janitor or the landlord. They can do him no harm and you no good, and they waste the city's money, which is your money."

JONES (*nods*)—That's sensible anyway. The way people get mad on *me*! (*Jennie slaps book down on Tim's cheek, who yells, chases her with his pea-shooter.*)

MRS. DAY—Children, do be quiet! Well, where can we write?

JENNIE (*Opens book*)—I'll read it.

"Where to Make Complaint.

If you have any complaint to make about a tenement, you can write, telephone or call at the Tenement House Department in—Manhattan, "no, that's not us," The Bronx, "nor that," Brooklyn, "yes, that is, at 503 Fulton Street, near Hoyt Street." Telephone—"well, we haven't any 'phone, we don't care for that, but we can write."

TIM—Yes, let's; let's do it now.

MRS. DAY (*To Tim*)—You write the best. Take this chair (*puts chair to table and clears a space*). Katie'll get the pen and ink and some paper, and you can write what we tell you.

TIM—Righto! (*Sits at kitchen table—Katie brings him writing materials, all crowd around him but Jones, who leans against the door.*)

TIM—How do I begin? (*Pause—all look at one another; Katie giggles.*)

MRS. DAY (*helplessly*)—I don't know. (*Jennie slaps her mother's back with the paper. Mrs. T. starts up.*)

MRS. T.—We always begin, "Dear Somebody."

JENNIE—We might say "Dear Tenement Department."

ALL—Yes, that will do.

MRS. DAY—Write that, Tim.

TIM—It's written. Now what shall we complain of?

MRS. DAY—Say that the oilcloth is torn.

KATIE—And that the hall's so dark, and I fell down.

MRS. T.—Say there's open garbage in the hall and a bad smell.

JENNIE—And our baby's sick from the flies and smells and I can't swat 'em fast enough. (*Slaps wall.*)

ALL—Say it is so dirty.

TIM—Oh, not so fast. (*Drops his pen and puts hand to ears.*) I can't write like a steam engine. One at a time (*jumps up*). I'll tell you something else I'm going to say: we need a backyard to play in (*walks up and down*).

KATIE—And a bath—it's awful always to wash in a basin in the kitchen.

JENNIE—And a fire escape (*looks Jones earnestly in the face*).

ALL—Yes, yes; a fire escape!

JONES—Well, I'm mighty curious to know if all this helps any.

(*Enter Barber, the landlord. All stop and look at him in embarrassment. Tim covers his letter with a newspaper. Mrs. Day seizes Tim's chair and pushes it forward.*)

MRS. DAY—Good morning, Mr. Barber, won't you take a seat?

BARBER—No, I've just dropped in to say a word about the rent.

MRS. DAY (*Pushes chair toward him*)—Do sit down, sir.

JONES (*Grins*)—Why don't you folks make some of your complaints to Mr. Barber, now you've got your landlord right before you?

(*All look at each other; Mrs. Day twists her apron, Katie giggles. Mrs. T. rises; Jennie raises her swatter as though to strike him, but her mother pulls it from her hand.*)

BARBER—Well, why don't you speak up?

MRS. T. (*Comes forward*)—If you please, sir, there's a good many things about this tenement that ain't right. We was hoping you'd make some changes.

BARBER—What! changes this year when business is so bad and half my rent isn't paid?

MRS. DAY—Well, you might do some *little* things; here's my girl's—(*pushes Katie forward*) see her arm. She tripped in the torn oilcloth in the dark hall. I s'pose you couldn't light the hall daytimes, but anyway you might get a new piece of oilcloth.

BARBER—Well, we'll see; we'll see. I can't stay now.

MRS. DAY (*desperately*)—That's always the way; you never do anything but "see." We'll have to send that letter to the Tenement House Department. We were just—

BARBER—What! a letter to the Tenement House Department! Oh, that isn't necessary. You can have some new oilcloth. Certainly, I'll send some right off.

MRS. DAY—And will the hall be lighted?

MRS. T.—And will you stop the smells, and clear out the nasty garbage my neighbor leaves about?

BARBER—I'll speak about the garbage, but that's the tenant's fault.

TIM—And give me a backyard to play in?

BARBER (*Turning on him fiercely*)—See here, you young beggar, you want the earth. I'll see—

MRS. DAY (*Goes back to the table*)—I guess we'd better send the letter. (*Sound of gong outside and cries of "Fire! Fire!"*)

MRS. T.—Fire! oh, my baby (*rushes out followed by Jennie*).

TIM—Fire! fire! and we have no fire escape!

MRS. DAY—Run, run, children (*takes Katie's hand and runs out; Katie screams*).

TIM—Fire! fire! (*Exit, janitor follows on the run*).

BARBER (*Looks from window*)—God! no fire escape, and we're five flights up! (*throws up his hands, runs out*).

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# KILLING GIANTS

## A Playlet in Three Scenes

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SCENE I: A city street Six boys shooting craps.

TIM—There's my penny (*throws*). Shure it's near the crack—now, don't you kick it, you spalpeen (*to Skinny, who goes to examine it*).

SKINNY (*Steps back*)—I wasn't.

TIM—G'wan, Abe.

ABE—No, I waits a leetle. You trow now (*to Bill*).

BILL—Aw right (*shoots his penny*).

LOU (*contemptuously*)—Gee, I kin beat that (*shoots his penny*). (*All laugh jeeringly.*)

LOU (*angrily*)—Shut up! An' you, Tony, I bet you can't do near so well.

TONY (*with a swift throw—shrugging*)—I no shoota very good. You shoota betta, Abe.

ABE (*carefully measures the space and throws nearer than any of the others*)—I got it. The pennies is mine.

TONY (*shrugs again*)—Abe always getta the pennies.

ABE—Well, I shoots the best (*picks up the coins and counts them carefully and puts in his pocket*). Let's play onst more.

BILL (*cheerfully*)—Ain't got no more pennies.

SKINNY (*discontentedly*)—Shooting craps ain't no fun. Wisht we could do somethin' excitin'. Wisht an elephant'd scape from a 'nagerie or somethin' real 'venturus.

LOU—Say, fellas, wouldn't you a liked a been Teddy Roosevelt and shoot lions and tigers? Gee, that's the life!

TONY—My grandfoder, he was a sailor, and he went alla round the world. He had rings in his ears, and he saw Chinees an' lots of funny people where they live.

SKINNY—Wisht I was a sailor!

TIM—Shure—a sailor ain't in it with a pirate. Holy Virgin, I bet a pirate has a fine life. I've seen them at the movies with black flags and cutlasses and heavy seas, and streams of blood, and a white wiper 'round yur head.

BILL—I'd rather be Raffles. I saw him to a show onst. He could steal that slick that you couldn't tell it was him at all, and my! he wore the gladest rags!

SKINNY—En' Harry Thaw—I'd like to be him.

LOU—He don't have no real fun, not like the Colorado natives in the mines, that shoot Indians and find lots of gold and kidnap girls.

ABE—Dere's a kid in one of our books dat kilt a giant.

BILL—What's a giant?

TIM—A big bloke—twicte as big as us. I saw a giant in a show onst. He was 'bout ten feet high.

BILL—Oh, shucks; there ain't no sich big men.

ABE—Yes, dere vas. Goliath, he vas colossal, and David he was liddle like us, and David he kilt Goliath.

LOU—How'd he do it?

ABE—Mit a sling, so—pff—Goliath put his hand to his head and fell dead an' he was all in solid gold armour.

BILL—Huh (*contemptuously*).

SKINNY—My! (*admiringly*).

ABE—Giants is always very bad men.

SKINNY (*gets close to Tony as a tall man passes*)—Say, is that maybe a giant?

TONY—Very bigga man. Don't know.

LOU—He ain't no giant.

ABE—But one might come by.

SKINNY (*excitedly*)—Then we could kill him. It'd be great.

TONY—Lak a lion or a tiger.

TIM—An' where's you guys git a sling?

BILL—We c'd make one, sure.

ABE—I got a piece of rubber in my pocket (*fumbles for it*).

LOU—I got a knife. I'll whittle a stick (*gets it out. Lou gives him stick*).

TONY—I getta a lil' stone, a slick lil' stone (*looks on ground for one*).

SKINNY—Then we'll watch for a giant.

TIM—And its then we'll be saving all the people from the giant.

ABE—Goliath, he'd been an awful bad man, and stronger than two. He's et boys like us.

SKINNY—Oh!

(*Enter a big man, passes across stage, stick in hand.*)

ABE—He's most a giant, ain't he?

BILL—Let her fly.

LOU (*shoots; man puts hand to head, drops stick and staggers. Police appears to help him up. Another policeman rushes after the boys*).

BOYS (*yell*)—Oh, the cops! (*run off. Police catches Skinny and Lou, who wriggle*).

LOU—Lemme go, I didn't do nothing! (*but Lou has sling in his hand*).

POLICE—Here, you come along with me (*marches them off stage*).

SCENE 2. Court: Judge at desk. Witness chair at left. Table at right with reporter. Clerk approaches.

JUDGE—Call Lou Robbins and Skinny Peters.

CLERK (*loudly*)—Lou Robbins and Skinny Peters. (*Enter Lou and Skinny with police officer*.)

JUDGE—Thomas Robbins.

CLERK—Thomas Robbins. (*Enter Robbins*.)

JUDGE—Mrs. Peters.

CLERK—Mrs. Peters. (*Enter Mrs. Peters*.)

JUDGE—Mrs. Smith.

CLERK—Mrs. Smith. (*Enter Mrs. Smith*.)

JUDGE—Officer, take the stand. (*Policeman sits in chair*.)

CLERK (*Holds up his hand to policeman, who does the same*)—You do solemnly swear that the evidence you shall give in this case shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

POLICEMAN (*Nods*).

JUDGE—Officer, did you arrest these boys?

POLICE—Yes, your Honor.

JUDGE—State under what circumstances you arrested them.

POLICE—Saturday morning at about 11 o'clock I was on my beat at Grand Street when I saw a man stagger around the corner of Second Avenue, and fall. Another officer ran to him and I rushed 'round the corner and made for a gang of boys there. They took to their heels but I nabbed these two, and one of them (*pointing to Lou*) had this sling in his hand and the other had a stone. Here they are (*shows them to Judge*).

JUDGE—Did you have any talk with the boys?

POLICE—Yes, your Honor. They were terribly frightened, and I will say that they were more afraid that the man was killed than that I would catch them. That's why they didn't make a getaway. The one with the sling said with a sob, "Oh, is he killed; Oh, what have we done?" and the other cried like a girl, saying, "We never meant to hurt any one." "What did you do it for?" says I. "Didn't you ever try one of them slings on a bird or a cat?" We went around the corner and saw the other officer pick up the man and then he came to and groaned, and the boys felt worse than ever. The little one, him, (*pointing to Skinny*) cried louder than ever and said, "Oh, we never meant to hurt him, we was only playing," and the big one said pretty solemn like, "I'm mighty glad we didn't kill him." Then he squirmed and nearly got out of my grip, but I said, "Here, none of your nonsense; come along with me."

(*The boys squirm uncomfortably while he talks.*)

JUDGE—Call the witness. (*Mrs. Smith, her handkerchief in her hand, takes the stand. Clerk swears her.*)

JUDGE—What is your name?

MRS. S.—Mary Smith.

JUDGE—What's your husband's name?

MRS. S.—Samuel Smith.

JUDGE—Where do you live?

MRS. S.—1535 Grand Street, please.

JUDGE—Where were you on Saturday morning at 11 o'clock?

MRS. S.—I was standing in my doorway, please. I had just said good-bye to my husband, who was starting off. Oh, sir, he looked so big and strong as he walked down the street that I had to look at him. I was proud to have so fine a husband. And now—— (*breaks down and cries, face in hands*).

JUDGE—There, there, don't cry. The doctor says he will soon get well, doesn't he?

MRS. S. (*Sobs*)—Yes, your Honor, but he was going that day to get a fine job that he's been hoping for for a long time, and he's been out of employment and we've spent everything, and now he's lost the job and we've got doctors' bills, and no food in the house for the children. He ain't very sick, but he'll have a scar on his forehead. But, oh dear! oh dear! he's lost the fine job that was to keep us all.

(*Boys squirm.*)

JUDGE—Did you see these boys when he fell?

MRS. S.—Yes, sure I did. That one (*pointing to Lou*) it was that slung the stone hit my Sam. There was other boys, too, that ran away. Oh boys (*holding out her hands*), why did you go to hurt my man and make him lose his job?

SKINNY (*mutters*)—We didn't go to hurt him.

JUDGE—That's all. (*Mrs. Smith leaves the chair and stands near the others.*) (*To Lou and Skinny*)—Now, boys, you have heard these witnesses testify against you. You have a right to get a lawyer in this case, if you wish. (*Turns to the parents*) It is not necessary to have a lawyer. Probably the boys will get along just as well without one, but it is your privilege if you wish to hire one.

MRS. PETERS—I'm a poor woman, sir.

MR. ROBBINS—I'll leave it to your Honor.

JUDGE—Very well (*to boys*). Are you ready for the trial or do you desire to bring any witnesses?

LOU—We're ready, Sir. We ain't got no witnesses.

JUDGE—Lou Robbins, do you want to state your case? Now don't be afraid. Tell us first how it happened and how you came to do it.

LOU (*Draws a long breath*)—Yes, sir.

JUDGE—Well, what were you doing when Mr. Smith came along?

LOU—Nothin', sir. Just playing.

JUDGE—What were you playing?

LOU (*Hangs his head*).

JUDGE—Just tell me what you were playing. I used to play, too, when I was a boy (*silence. Turns to Skinny*). What were you playing?

SKINNY—Why it was about giants, an' we been telling stories 'bout pirates and 'ventures.

JUDGE—And you wanted an adventure?

SKINNY—Yes, like we'd seen in the movies. Not just scrappin' on the streets.

JUDGE—And who was Lou playing he was?

SKINNY—Oh, he was David. Abe told us about him.

JUDGE—Who is Abe?

LOU (*roughly*)—Oh, he wasn't anybody; just a boy we used to know at school (*nudges Skinny*).

JUDGE—So you were David and you had a sling. Oh, yes, I see, and Mr. Smith was Goliath, I suppose.

SKINNY (*gasping*)—Say, how'd you get wise? Arn't you a smart one?

JUDGE—Did you know Mr. Smith? Had he ever bothered you?

LOU—No, sir; it was just that he was so big.

SKINNY (*eagerly*)—We thought that he was a giant, sir, and giants are so bad. They eat babies an' awful things. David was a hero because he killed a giant and so was Jack the giant-killer.

MRS. S.—My poor husband, eat babies! and him loved his own children so! Oh dear! (*weeps*).

CLERK—Silence!

JUDGE—Didn't you think when you set out to be heroes that you ought to learn something about the giants you try to kill? What if another boy would kill your father because he thought he was a giant?

SKINNY—Oh dear, I wish we hadn't.

JUDGE—Now here is a man just like your father, and you have made him sick and kept him from getting a job, and made his wife and children hungry, and all because you didn't think of other people when you were playing. Do you think that such careless dangerous boys ought to be left to play on the street?

LOU—I d'n know.

JUDGE—And what about Abe and the other boys.

LOU—There wasn't no other boys.

JUDGE (*to Skinny*)—Weren't there four or five other boys playing that game?

SKINNY (*squirms*)—No, sir; they'd all gone home.

JUDGE—And you two were playing all alone when you hit Mr. Smith.

BOTH—Yes, sir.

JUDGE—Well, well; let Thomas Robbins take the stand (*Robbins comes to chair*).

CLERK—You do solemnly swear that the evidence you shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; and so help you God. (*Robbins holds up his hand.*)

JUDGE—What is your name?

ROBBINS—Thomas Robbins, your Honor.

JUDGE—Where do you live?

ROBBINS—312 Second Avenue.

JUDGE—What relation are you to Lou Robbins?

ROBBINS—I'm his father, sir.

JUDGE—What kind of boy is Lou at home?

ROBBINS—He's allus been a good 'nough boy, your Honor. Only I can't never keep him home. He is always at the movies or with the gang. He ain't never hurt no one before. He's allus good to his little sister and brother. I'm sure he wouldn't a-hurt any one if he'd a thot.

JUDGE—Has he ever gotten into trouble before for breaking windows or throwing stones?

ROBBINS—No, your Honor, never.

JUDGE—That is all. (*Robbins leaves the chair.*) Mrs. Peters. (*Mrs. P. takes the stand.*)

CLERK—Do you solemnly swear that the evidence you shall give is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth? (*Mrs. Peters nods.*)

JUDGE—What is your name?

MRS. P.—Jane Peters, your Honor.

JUDGE—What is your husband's name?

MRS. P.—John, your Honor, but he's dead these two years.

JUDGE—What relation are you to Skinny?

MRS. P.—I'm his mother, sir.

JUDGE—Are there any more children?

MRS. P.—Oh, yes, your Honor, there's Mamie and Johnnie, Lily and the baby. There are five children I have to work for and keep as best I can.

JUDGE—Does Skinny help you? Is he a good boy?

MRS. P. (*eagerly*)—Oh, yes, your Honor, he's the best boy ever. He's as good as a girl with Lily and the baby and always helps me lots. He's a great reader, too, borrows books from people and tells me all about the heroes in 'em. He's talked lots about being a hero and having adventures. But a nicer son never was, Judge. He's careful of Lily and baby and helps me with house and dishes.

JUDGE—Has he ever tried to hurt anyone as far as you know?

MRS. P.—Oh, no, sir; Skinny hurt anyone! Why, sir, when I heard he was locked up for stoning a man, I said, it can't be my Skinny. He's that tender-hearted. It must have been bad company, your Honor.

JUDGE—That's all. (*Mrs. P. leaves the stand wiping her eyes.*) Now, boys, let me talk with you (*boys draw nearer*). So you boys wanted to have an adventure, was that it?

LOU (*low*)—That's it, sir.

JUDGE—And you thought it would be brave to kill a giant like David?

SKINNY—Yes, sir.

JUDGE—But you didn't choose your giant very successfully, did you? When you picked out poor Mr. Smith, who was a man just like your father, whose family are now suffering because he is sick?

LOU (*hanging his head*)—We didn't think—

JUDGE—Well, let us think a little now. You have committed a serious crime all because you were so eager to do something heroic. I cannot let you boys be at large because you might throw another stone and perhaps next time you might kill your man.

SKINNY—We'll never do it again, sir.

JUDGE—I hope not, but of course, we must punish you this time. Playing at killing men is pretty dangerous sport. You will find that there are plenty of bad things in life you can fight. Perhaps you will learn what some of them are at the place where I am going to send you, but we can't have you killing men. There isn't any real fun in that.

MRS. S.—Oh, please your Honor!

CLERK—Silence!

JUDGE—I commit you two boys, Lou Robbins and Skinny Peters, to the Juvenile Asylum to stay until you have learned that you cannot attack passersby.

MRS. P.—Oh, my Skinny! (*cries*).

JUDGE—Remove the boys, Clerk, and call the next case.

(*Robbins takes Lou by the shoulder, Mrs. Peters clings to Skinny—all walk out—Mrs. Smith wiping her eyes, too.*)

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SCENE III: *Street. Abe, Tony, Bill and Tim.*

BILL—Did you hear what Lou and Skinny got?

TIM—It's up to the 'Sylum for them.

TONY—They most catcheda me, too.

ABE—I didn't think dey would shoot dat man wid a stone.



BILL—But it was you, Abe, who told us about giants.

ABE (*doggedly*)—But I didn't try to kill no giants. I wouldn't a done such a ting.

TONY—I droppa my lil' stone pretty quick!

BILL—Well, I feel pretty punk to lose two of our gang to the 'Sylum.


TONY—Skinny was a vera nice boy.

TIM—An' Lou was a corker.

(*Silence for a moment.*)

BILL—Well, kids, I guess we'd better go swimming and have no more 'ventures. I don't think giant-killing pays.

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